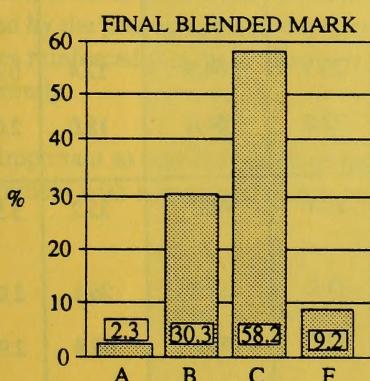
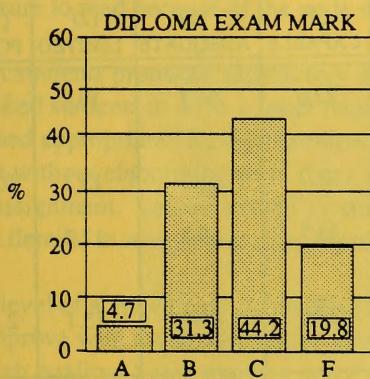
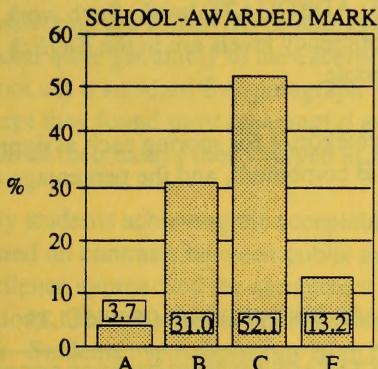


**Student Evaluation**

OCT - 5 1990

# English 33 Diploma Examination Results



The summary information in this report is intended to provide teachers, school administrators, students, and the general public with an overview of results from the June 1990 administration of the English 33 Diploma Examination. The information is most helpful when used in conjunction with the detailed school and jurisdiction reports that have been mailed to schools and school jurisdiction offices. The first annual provincial report containing a detailed analysis of the combined January and June results is available this fall.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE EXAM

The English 33 Diploma Examination consists of two parts: a written-response section worth 50% and a multiple-choice section worth 50%.

## ACHIEVEMENT OF STANDARDS

The information reported is based on the final blended marks achieved by 4 589 students who wrote the June 1990 examination.

- 90.8% of these students achieved the acceptable standard (a final blended mark of 50% or higher).
- 2.3% of these students achieved the standard of excellence (a final blended mark of 80% or higher).

## PROVINCIAL AVERAGES

- The average school-awarded mark was 60.0%.
- The average diploma exam mark was 59.8%.
- The average final blended mark, representing an equal weighting of the diploma and school marks, was 60.3%.

## PART A: WRITTEN RESPONSE

Part A: Written Response is written at a different time from Part B: Reading (Multiple Choice) and contributes 50% of the total examination mark. Students are required to complete three writing assignments, each of which assesses a variety of writing and thinking skills.

Readers will find the results most meaningful in the context of the assignments and the scoring descriptors. The most useful starting place for reviewing these results is at the (3) ADEQUATE level. Such work exceeds the pass mark of 50%. The scoring guides that describe proficiency levels are in the *English 33 Diploma Examination Update for 1991*, which is available in all schools.

The table below outlines the requirements for each assignment, the categories for scoring each assignment, the amount each category contributes to the total mark (Parts A and B combined), and the percentage of students achieving at the various levels of expectation.

**PART A: WRITTEN-RESPONSE BLUEPRINT and PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF RESULTS**

DESCRIPTION OF THE WRITING ASSIGNMENT	SCORING CATEGORY	PROPORTION OF TOTAL MARK (%)	PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SCORES					
			(5) PROFICIENT	(4) CAPABLE	(3) ADEQUATE	(2) LIMITED	(1) POOR	(0) INS
<u>Personal Response to Literature</u> The student is required to discuss an aspect of literature from a personal perspective.	1. Thought and Detail  2. Organization  3. Matters of Choice  4. Matters of Convention	10.0  5.0  5.0  5.0	1.7  1.5  2.6  3.6	22.0  22.7  23.7  29.0	54.7  61.2  59.8  49.4	19.8  13.3  12.1  15.1	1.4  0.8  1.2  2.4	0.5  0.5  0.5  0.5
<u>Functional Writing</u> The assignment is functional in nature. The student is required to write about a given situation.	1. Thought and Detail  2. Organization  3. Writing Skills	10.0  2.5  2.5	1.1  1.5  2.1	16.0  20.5  23.0	59.4  64.9  54.6	22.5  12.4  18.0	0.7  0.4  2.0	0.3  0.3  0.3
<u>Response to Visual Communication</u> The writing assignment is connected to one or more photographs and/or cartoons. The student is required to write about main ideas and techniques of visual communication.	1. Thought and Detail  2. Organization  3. Writing Skills	5.0  2.5  2.5	1.5  1.5  1.9	12.1  11.2  17.0	46.1  57.7  57.2	35.2  26.1  19.4	3.5  2.0  2.9	1.6  1.6  1.6

Note: The shaded portion represents the percentage of students who achieved or exceeded an ADEQUATE level of performance.

## EXAMINERS' COMMENTS

On Part A: Written Response, students are expected to express their ideas clearly, thoughtfully, and coherently, and to use supporting details to develop these ideas in all three writing assignments. Students should also demonstrate effective diction and syntax, and control of grammar and mechanics. Most students understood and responded satisfactorily to all three assignments on the June 1990 Part A: Written Response examination.

In answering the PERSONAL RESPONSE TO LITERATURE assignment, students appeared to respond quite genuinely to the excerpt from Margaret Atwood's *Cat's Eye*. Consequently, many students did not use a standard five-paragraph essay organization. Students were able to draw on features of the excerpt they found most meaningful and to incorporate these features in their introductions. The organization of their essays then evolved as the writers explored their responses to features of the text.

Many students achieving the acceptable standard wrote about infatuation, dating, "true love;" others focused on contrasts between public and private behaviors. Many students achieving the standard of excellence approached the assignment with a "three-pronged" focus: interests, behaviors, and opinions. The majority of students described a personal anecdotal experience in response to the assignment. Students used quotations from the selection judiciously and often thoughtfully. More so than in the past, students referred to other literature they had studied. Markers noted that most papers were a pleasure to read because of the wide variety of responses to this assignment.

Most students produced satisfactory work on the FUNCTIONAL WRITING assignment, which required students to write a letter requesting a solution to a problem. In most assignments, the tone seemed appropriate. Students achieving the acceptable standard used information supplied in the assignment without elaborating on it. Less successful students often omitted some of the details provided in the assignment. Letters written by students achieving the standard of excellence were enhanced by plausible details; in many cases, the information was organized in original ways.

The level of achievement on the RESPONSE TO VISUAL COMMUNICATION assignment continues to improve with each examination administration. Many students are writing substantial compositions of high quality. Some markers noted that the caption provided for this particular photograph helped students to focus their work. Students achieving the standard of excellence chose a general idea suggested by the photograph and explained how the details in the photograph and the photographer's techniques reinforced this idea. However, less successful students had problems organizing their ideas coherently.

It is important to note that students must answer the RESPONSE TO VISUAL COMMUNICATION assignment with a sustained response. Very brief responses will continue to be deemed insufficient.

## PART B: READING (MULTIPLE CHOICE)

### RESULTS

Results are in average raw scores.

Total Part B: 40.9 out of 69

Subtest Results:<sup>\*</sup>

- Course Content
  - Meanings: 15.6 out of 26
  - Relationships: Form and Content: 9.4 out of 15
  - Human Experience and Values: 8.5 out of 15
  - Life Skills: 7.4 out of 13

\* Readers are cautioned NOT to compare subtest results because the subtests are not of equal difficulty. Readers should compare these provincial subtest results with their own school results.

### EXAMINATION BLUEPRINT

Part B: Reading (Multiple Choice) has a value of 70 marks, one mark for each multiple-choice question. Each question is classified in two ways: according to the curricular content area being tested and according to the thinking (process) skill demanded by the question. The examination blueprint illustrates the distribution of questions in June 1990 according to these classifications. It is important to note that one multiple-choice question was deleted after a review of question statistics.

Question Type by Course Content	Question Type by Thinking Skills			Examination Emphasis (%)
	Literal Understanding	Inference and Application	Evaluation	
Meanings	5	4, 8, 9, 10, 16, 17, 18, 39, 40, 41, 43, 44, 51, 52, 57, 58, 61, 62*, 64, 66, 67, 70	1, 13, 25, 45	27 items (19%)
Relationships: Form and Content	59	6, 11, 12, 14, 15, 19, 21, 24, 46, 48, 63, 65	3, 68	15 items (11%)
Human Experience and Values	54	23, 42, 50, 53, 55, 56, 60	2, 7, 20, 22, 47, 49, 69	15 items (11%)
Life Skills	26, 31, 32, 38	27, 28, 29, 30, 34, 37	33, 35, 36	13 items (9%)
Examination Emphasis (%)	7 items (5%)	47 items (34%)	16 items (11%)	70 items (50%)

\*Question 62 was deleted from the examination. See page 6 for a discussion of this question.

The following table shows question-by-question results and the keyed answers. There is a parallel table in the school and jurisdiction reports showing the percentage of students selecting each alternative. From this table, teachers can determine areas of strength and weakness in the achievement of their students relative to the province as a whole and, consequently, areas of strength and weakness in their programs.

QUES.	KEY	DIFF.*	QUES.	KEY	DIFF.	QUES.	KEY	DIFF.	QUES.	KEY	DIFF.	QUES.	KEY	DIFF.
1	D	56.4	15	C	77.8	29	B	51.7	43	A	55.8	57	A	48.7
2	A	91.0	16	A	81.9	30	D	76.2	44	D	48.2	58	A	62.0
3	B	57.3	17	B	71.2	31	D	67.4	45	D	46.3	59	D	45.2
4	C	70.0	18	A	55.1	32	C	64.4	46	A	55.3	60	C	53.7
5	B	72.2	19	B	73.7	33	C	47.0	47	A	59.5	61	C	60.9
6	D	74.1	20	D	79.9	34	B	59.0	48	D	46.9	62	Question deleted	
7	D	40.5	21	C	66.9	35	C	42.1	49	A	55.8	63	A	60.5
8	A	54.9	22	B	46.2	36	A	57.3	50	B	55.1	64	C	69.0
9	D	76.5	23	C	62.6	37	D	63.8	51	A	43.1	65	B	84.0
10	B	70.8	24	B	61.2	38	C	36.3	52	C	46.9	66	D	42.4
11	A	62.3	25	D	61.6	39	A	61.7	53	C	45.8	67	C	63.6
12	A	69.5	26	B	60.0	40	D	54.8	54	D	60.7	68	D	54.6
13	D	48.7	27	C	66.6	41	B	73.0	55	D	71.3	69	C	48.1
14	B	52.0	28	C	46.3	42	B	39.7	56	B	40.8	70	B	66.3

\*Difficulty -- percentage of students answering the question correctly

## EXAMINERS' COMMENTS

Students' performance on Part B: Reading (Multiple Choice) of the June 1990 English 33 Diploma Examination was generally satisfactory. During the marking session, a group of teachers reviewed the examination in detail. They noted that although Part B: Reading (Multiple Choice) was challenging, it was a fair examination and it set a reasonable standard of achievement for English 33 students.

Some teachers thought that questions 15, 17, and 20 based on the selection "Gwilan's Harp" set too high a standard of expectation for students. However, this was not borne out by the results. The reading selection was challenging, but it was also written beautifully and about a subject of interest to young people (love and commitment in relationships). English 33 students appear to respond better to moving, challenging literature than they do to more simplistic, less emotive writing.

The table below relates to four selected questions from the examination. For each question, three statistical references are noted: the percentage of all students choosing the correct answer, the percentage of students answering correctly who achieved the STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE (80% and better, or "A") on Parts A and B combined, and the percentage of students answering correctly who achieved the ACCEPTABLE STANDARD (50% to 64%, or "C") on Parts A and B combined. The comments following the table discuss some of the decisions that students made and some of the skills that they used to answer correctly.

Percentage of Students Correctly Answering Selected Questions  
(Parts A and B Combined )

Student Group	Question Number			
	15	17	20	62
All Students	77.8	71.2	79.9	26.4
Students Achieving the Standard of Excellence (80% and better, or "A" )	93.5	89.3	89.3	50.9
Students Achieving the Acceptable Standard (50% to 64%, or "C")	78.1	69.4	79.8	21.2

### Questions

15. The statement "But all this beauty was practical, obedient, shaped to the service of sound" (lines 13-14) communicates the idea that the harp
- A. promised status for musicians
  - B. provided employment for craftsmen
  - \*C. was intended to be played, not just admired
  - D. was intended to be uplifting, not commonplace

### Comments

Some teachers considered question 15 to be "on the challenging end of the spectrum." However, 77.8% of the students successfully answered the question. Most students understood the metaphor "the service of sound," which is a reasonable expectation for English 33 students. Students who achieved the standard of excellence did very well on this question: 93.5% answered correctly. Those who achieved the acceptable standard did quite well: 78.1% answered correctly. Of those students who failed the examination (achieved scores of 49% or less), 59.4% of them responded correctly to this question.

## EXAMINERS' COMMENTS (continued)

### Questions

17. In the context of the entire sentence, the phrase "her hands were iron and her touch was silk" (line 23) suggests that Gwilan

- A. treated the harp with deep respect
- \*B. showed great strength and artistry
- C. was determined to master her art
- D. was mature and responsible

20. The MOST PROBABLE reason that Torm "had never suggested a wedding, with singing and harp-playing" (lines 74-75) is that he

- A. lacked the money to finance a celebration
- B. feared the teasing of his family and friends
- C. suspected that Gwilan resented hearing others play
- \*D. understood that Gwilan missed playing her special harp

*Questions 15, 17, and 20 are part of a set of 12 questions based on an excerpt from "Gwilan's Harp", a story by Ursula K. Le Guin. Some teachers who reviewed the examination for appropriateness of standards expressed the belief that the story "set too high a standard" for English 33 students. Other teachers noted that the theme and language of the story would be of interest to students and would relate to their lives. The results indicate that students found the selection engaging and interesting. They found that the questions were not only manageable; many of them were quite easy.*

62. The phrase "kinder days" (line 89) refers to the time when

- A. boys could dream of being baseball heroes
- \*B. baseball was played in Maple Leaf Stadium
- C. baseball players put the game before money
- D. baseball fans were generous and understanding

*Question 62 is part of a set of eight questions based on the narrative poem "The Last Batter" by Raymond Souster. The teachers who reviewed the examination for appropriateness of standards concurred that the poem represented an appropriate and fair level of expectation. Some teachers noted that the poem would appeal to sports-minded students but might be tedious reading for others.*

Students who achieved at or above the standard of excellence on the examination as a whole demonstrated that they consistently read the selections and all parts of each question carefully and thoughtfully. Results indicate that students who verify their ideas by reading the text carefully, by attending to details in the text, and by rereading for added meaning use such skills consistently.

For further information, contact Elana Scraba, Tom Dunn, or Gloria Malick at the Student Evaluation Branch, 427-2948.

### Comments

**Question 17** required students to interpret an abstract phrase, which is a reasonable expectation for English 33 students. Students were well prepared to answer this question: 71.2% chose the correct alternative. Some teachers thought that this question would be "too metaphoric" for English 33 students. However, 89.3% of the students achieving the standard of excellence answered correctly, and 69.4% of the students achieving the acceptable standard also answered correctly. Some teachers were concerned that students would be drawn strongly to alternative D, "was mature and responsible." However, none of the students achieving the standard of excellence chose this alternative, and only 4.4% of the students who failed the examination selected it.

**Question 20** required students to have an understanding of Gwilan and Torm, and of their relationship. English 33 students are expected to be able to infer the motive for a character's behavior. Some teachers believed that students would find this question very difficult. The students did very well, however; overall, 79.9% chose the correct response, indicating their understanding of characterization. Of the students achieving the standard of excellence, 89.3% answered correctly; of those achieving the acceptable standard, 79.8% answered correctly. Of the students who failed the examination, 63.4% answered correctly.

Students found **question 62** to be very difficult; it appears that they did not reread the poem to find the answer. The strongest draw was to A, "boys could dream of being baseball heroes." Only 26.4% of the students chose the keyed response. Of the students achieving the acceptable level, 21.2% answered correctly. Of the failing students, 17.7% answered correctly. Slightly more than half the students achieving the standard of excellence (50.9%) chose the keyed response. The decision was made to delete question 62 from the examination because it appeared to be too difficult for English 33 students.



